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UNCLAS ABUJA 001630

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL LI NI

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN PRESIDENCY STATEMENT ON TAYLOR

REF: A. ABUJA 1576 AND PREVIOUS

B. LAGOS 1928 AND PREVIOUS

C. FBIS AFP20030918000148

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED, NOT FOR PUBLICATION ON THE INTRANET OR INTERNET.

¶1. (SBU) According to press reports, the Nigerian Presidential Spokesman, Mrs. Remi Oyo, told the press Tuesday evening September 26 that the GON was displeased with Charles Taylor. She is quoted as saying, "The GON has made it clear to Mr. Taylor that it will not tolerate any breach of these conditions and others which forbid him from engaging in active communications with anyone engaged in political, illegal or government activities." Also, "The GON wishes to state that the conditions given, and accepted by Mr. Taylor, for his asylum in Nigeria, clearly forbid any interference in the ongoing political process aimed at ending the prolonged crisis in Liberia and returning the country to peace and normalcy." She was responding to a question on allegations by UNSYG Special Envoy Klein that Taylor was making phone calls to Liberian officials.

¶2. (SBU) Mrs. Oyo's quoted statement is in line with GON public policy that Taylor must be kept under control, and with the general Nigerian antipathy for Taylor (Refs A and B). But our contacts at the Foreign Ministry and Presidency have been unable to confirm that the Presidency made such a statement, and Mrs. Oyo has been backpedaling in public since (Ref C to the BBC) from the idea that the GON was confirming Klein's accusations.

MEECE